



WELCOME to September's newsletter for Churchdown u3a. I hope you've managed to enjoy the mixed summer weather that we've had. We now have a new Chair, as Robbie Philip stepped down at the AGM, so a huge thank you to Gary Murden who has taken on the role. However, no new volunteer came forward for the committee so it now stands at one less than last year, which is a bit worrying. Is it fair to accept this situation and expect one or two people to carry out two roles? This edition includes a couple of volunteering opportunities, so look out for how you can do your bit to ensure we are able to continue with all the activities we enjoy.

From the Chair:

Dear Members

As this is my first input to our newsletter as Chair, I would like to thank all of my fellow committee members, volunteer group leads and all of the members for making Churchdown u3a so successful. Well, as I'm writing this, the summer seems to have arrived and hopefully will stay for a few weeks at least. Maybe when we all meet again in September some of us will have healthy tans, rather than rust stains.

Our monthly talks have gone down a storm this year: the last one in July, about the RNLI, was informative about an organisation we are so lucky to have in the UK. Not only that but it's 200 years old and manned by volunteers! As I was born in Coventry, the English city furthest from the sea, I was pleased to hear that we have a lifeboat branch in the Forest of Dean! I would like to thank Jenny Cotton, who has stepped down as Speaker Secretary, having booked speakers to the end of the year. This means we will need someone to take this on if we are to continue to enjoy interesting talks at our monthly meetings. You do not need to be a committee member to book speakers, so please give it some serious consideration. At our next meeting on the 18th September, we have Chris Evans talking about the incredible work of the Butterfly Garden at Dundries Nursery.

I must also mention our Walking group led by Mary and Paul who organised a coach trip in July and August. The first in July was to walk Pen y Fan which

was unfortunately impacted by the weather but they still managed to complete a walking tour of the town of Brecon ending with refreshments. The second, to Shrewsbury, was more successful with 53 members attending. Part of the party visited the local flower show, coming back with various plants etc. Other group members enjoyed a walk along the river ending at the castle. Everyone enjoyed a great day visiting museums, restaurants, and meeting old friends, wonderful weather and a safe return home. We should not underestimate the logistical skill in organising these visits, well done team!

Finally, as your new chairman, I thought I would close with a few words about myself. I am married to Janet who was the reason for my joining the u3a as she has been a member for a few years. We moved to Churchdown 34 years ago, so now consider ourselves just about local. Both of our two children grew up here and still live locally. Janet worked for the NHS as a Paediatric Physiotherapist until retiring in 2017 and I worked for local aerospace companies including Dowty and Smiths, before retiring in 2018. We enjoy walking and in the last 10 months have become grandparents for the first time (3 grandchildren in total, we Murden's don't do things by halves!).

A final note, just to let you know I will continue in the Group Coordinator role for the coming year.

Please contact me if you can help with booking speakers.

Very best wishes, Gary Murden

Editor: Sue Grierson Please send contributions to: suegrierson@gmail.com
Tel: 07783061063

Membership Matters: Kate Methven

Once again, I greet you as your Membership Secretary for this year, and once again we are well into the renewal of subscriptions. If you have returned your form to me but not yet received your membership card it will be available at the monthly meeting, or I will aim to get it to you soon afterwards.

Jane Moore has once again offered to help process renewals during the monthly meetings in September and October. Please arrive with your completed form, I need this for my records as proof of payment, as the actual payment goes directly to the Treasurer.

The new year starts from 1st October and I remind all groups that they should be checking that members have joined or renewed and have their green membership card with them.

Bridge for All: Dave Bebbington

Things have been a bit quiet in our **Bridge for All** group over the summer (lots of members have been away doing summery stuff) but we've continued meeting on Thursday afternoons providing the opportunity for anyone who turns up to have a game, playing in our usual relaxed and convivial atmosphere.

We always encourage beginners and learners into our group and this September, I've got news for those readers of this splendid **UPDATE** newsletter who **do not** play bridge! Yes, you!

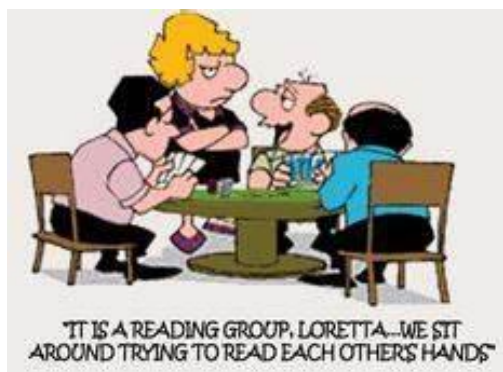
Our friends from the Churchdown Bridge Club have invited our u3a group to get involved with an event they are hosting at the CCA on the **9th** and **10th September**. As part of the "*Bridge – It's a Big Deal*" festival,

they are running **free** drop-in Bridge Taster Sessions on the mornings of Monday 9th and Tuesday 10th. Full details can be found on the *Bridge for All* group page of our u3a website. Or, if you'd rather, just contact me.

So, if you've ever wondered what the game of bridge is all about (or even if you hadn't) now's your chance to find out! It's aimed at complete beginners and will be a perfect introduction to the game. There's no charge, but you can make a donation to Cancer Research UK if you wish.

And, there's more good news! If the taster sessions have whetted your appetite and you would like to learn more, this autumn we are hoping to run a beginners' course similar to the one we ran last year. As before, it will be an EBU structured course of 10 to 12 lessons aimed at complete beginners and those wishing to 'go back to basics'. Details are yet to be decided, it all depends on the take-up. If you think you might be interested, please contact me.

As ever, we always welcome new members into our group at any time. We meet every Thursday afternoon, 2-4pm and 4-6pm at the Methodist Church Hall on Chapel Hay Lane. Please feel free to contact me, Dave Bebbington, via the link on the Churchdown u3a website or at davebebbington@outlook.com And as we always say, "*SEMPER REPRENHENDERE DISTRIBUTION!*"



Churchdown Bridge Club

Free drop-in Bridge Taster Sessions

Monday 9th September between 10-12am

Tuesday 10th September between 10-12am

Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road, GL3 2JH

Have you ever considered learning Bridge but haven't had the opportunity?

Do you enjoy playing cards and wonder if you'd enjoy playing Bridge?

Would you like to develop a new hobby which will keep your mind active?

Perhaps you've recently retired and have more free time?

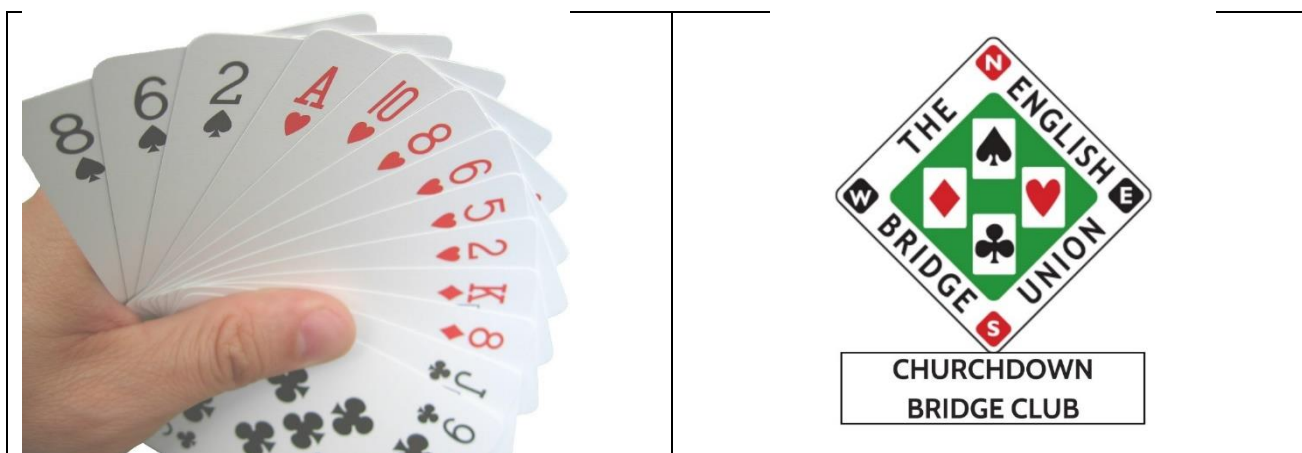
Would you like to make new friends and join a friendly and supportive Bridge Club?

Just drop in during one of our **free taster sessions**, and we'll introduce you to our club and give you the chance to play a simplified form of bridge, or call **Alan** on **07906 849640**.

If you already play some Bridge and would like to improve or play more competitively, come along to our **friendly classes**. We can help in determining which lessons would suit you best.

Churchdown Bridge Club offers Bridge lessons at all levels with tournaments suitable for new players.

Take a look at our website for more information bridgewebs.com/churchdown/



Industrial Heritage Group: Louise Keeling

The group has enjoyed a varied and interesting year, thanks to the contributions made by its members. The success of the group has been down to people offering to give talks and organise visits and speakers.

There have been visits to Hope Colliery and to Dunkirk Mills. The meetings have been varied with talks on a variety of subjects including the history of weights, life on the canals and Stansted Airport.

As of September, the group will meet at the Churchdown Club in Church Road. There, we will be able to use a larger and more comfortable room. If you're interested in joining this group please contact me.

Singing Together: Alan Winwood

The 'SINGING TOGETHER GROUP' (named after a schools radio programme which ran from 1939 - 1960 every Monday morning from 11am on the BBC Home Service), has now been meeting for over 6 years every second and fourth Monday from 2-3 p.m. in the Methodist Church Hall in Chapel Hay Lane.

The group sings *a cappella* (without instrumental accompaniment) learning a wide selection of songs of all different genres. The group, at full strength, is just over 20 and is comprised mainly of female voices. However, latterly we have warmly welcomed a small group of male songsters which gives a new dimension to our sound.

We have performed, by invitation, at small group gatherings round the village and our programme mixes songs with readings and lasts about 20 minutes.

We've had a summer break but will re-convene on September 9th so if you fancy a sing please come along and join us. We are a very friendly, supportive group and work hard on producing a high standard singing of... oh, and we laugh a lot. Just remember it's a fallacy when people

say 'oh I can't sing'. EVERYONE can sing, it's all a matter of confidence.

So please come and join us and swell our ranks for the coming year.

Yoga & Meditation: Sue Grierson

These two groups are a joy to lead. Unbelievably, we're about to start our 9th year of Yoga, some of us may be getting a bit more creaky these days but the time always seems to disappear quickly and we are still very much enjoying the sessions, long may they continue. I currently have a short waiting list for this group so please contact me if you'd like to add your name to it.



Meditation is in its 3rd year, meeting at Churchdown Club on the 1st Thursday of the month. We're a group of around 12 people and have explored various meditation and relaxation techniques, giving us the tools to practise on our own and then share our experiences when we come together. If you are curious about meditation but, for whatever reason, have held back from trying it out, you are very welcome to come along and see for yourself. The health benefits are well documented these days so do get in touch.

Cry for HELP!

Our Yoga Group has been using the picturesque Down Hatherley Village Hall for the last 6 years or so. It's a lovely, airy, clean and bright hall with views out over farmland. The hall is run by volunteers (of course) with the Chairman being our own John Hawkswell who runs two groups: Italian Appreciation and Creative Writing and the Treasurer is his wife, Jean, both in post for the last 14 years! I took on the Bookings Secretary role 2 years ago when the committee became very depleted and couldn't carry on without some fresh faces. So, although you may feel Down Hatherley has no particular connection to Churchdown, this hall has very strong connections to Churchdown u3a.

Unfortunately, we are in trouble again as Jean's health has deteriorated and she feels she is unable to carry on in the role. We have

exhausted all our avenues to find a replacement so I'm hoping that someone reading this will come to our rescue or know someone who can step in, maybe someone recently retired who is looking for a volunteering role, and wants to help out. It's not a particularly time-consuming job but is obviously a responsible and essential one. There is no commitment to attend regular committee meetings, we have one AGM a year and call a meeting when we feel the need, just one other in each year that I've been involved.

Please contact me in the first instance and I will put you in touch with Jean to find out exactly what's involved. I just ask that you don't automatically say NO, it would be such a shame if we had to close the hall for the lack of one person daring to say **YES!**

Best wishes in hope, Sue Grierson
suegrierson@gmail.com 07783 061063.

CHURCHDOWN u3a SPEAKER PROGRAMME

September – DECEMBER 2024

**Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 2pm
At Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road, GL3 2JH**

Date	Subject	Speaker
September 18 th	The Butterfly Garden	Chris Evans, Dundry Nurseries
October 16 th	Gloucestershire Inventions	Phil Collins
November 20 th	A Grandmother's Legacy	Jenny Mallin, Author/Writer
December 18 th	A Christmas Celebration	The Singing Together Group

Current Group List

Please contact the Group Convenor if you wish to join a group, or for more information go to our web-site: <https://u3asites.org.uk/churchdown>

Note: If you do not have the means to contact a convenor via the web page, please phone the Chair, Gary Murden, who will contact them for you
Tel: 07340 965083

Group	Convenor	Contact Details
Art History/Appreciation	Martin Bowden	01452 854007
Book Club/Literature	Joyce Winwood	01452 715099
Bridge for All	Dave Bebbington	07587 151191
Cookery	Eve Anstis	01242 235833
Crafts	Wendy Martin	01452 714049
Creative Writing	John Hawkswell	01452 730528
Cribbage	Diana Sinden	01452 698713
Exploring Churchdown	Pam Bryant	01452 532124
Current Affairs	Robbie Philip	01452 715033
Family History	Di Medland	Contact via web page
Film and Cinema	Norman Davies	07957 994390
Gardening	Ann Knight	Contact via web-page
Garden Visits	Jane Moore	Contact via web-page
Industrial Heritage	Louise Keeling	01452 712753
Italian Appreciation	John Hawkswell	01452 730528
Lunch Club	Tom Arnot	01452 498934
Meditation	Sue Grierson	07783 061063
MOTO (Members on their own)	Michael Potter	07392595970
Petanque	Ann Stollery	Contact via web-page
Photography	Ann Knight	Contact via web-page
Singing Together	Alan Winwood	01452 715099
Spanish (Language & Culture)	Maggie Thomas	01452 676751
Table Tennis	Syd Leuillette	01452 857039
Walking	Mary White	07817 007706
Wine Appreciation	Louise Keeling	01452 712753
Yoga	Sue Grierson	07783 061063

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